

PEACE POETRY ACTIVITY FOR PEACE DAY
September 21

Objective

- To express or represent a feeling or value related to peace in a poem

Materials

- Pens, pencils and paper

Activities

1) Share an example of a HAIKU and of a FREE VERSE poem. Emphasize to students that it's not so much how many words or syllables one writes; it's the feeling conveyed to the readers and listeners. If a child is unable to write in his/her own handwriting, he/she may dictate his/her poem and sign it.

Haiku: a haiku: 5-7-5 syllables, generally uses images from nature

Example:

Butterflies kiss buds
Fluttering, chasing, floating
"Peace" their wings whisper.

Free verse: free verse: no rhyme but uses some kind of rhythm, and includes personal themes.

Example:

Peace is sharing,
Peace is caring,
Peace is harmony.
Peace is love;
The symbol is a dove.
Peace is our freedom,
Peace is our friendship.

2) In small groups, brainstorm words associated with "peace" (at least 5) and write them on one piece of paper. Then brainstorm words about war and violence. And write these on a second piece of paper (at least 5).

3) Either individually or in small groups, create a haiku or free verse poem from these two sets of words.

4) Again using free verse, use the senses – touch, smell, hearing taste – to describe what you feel about peace.

Example:

Peace is soft purple like the middle of a sunrise
Peace tastes like warm waffles with fresh strawberries
It smells like fresh linen out to dry
Peace looks like clear pool waters
And sounds like a lullaby
Peace feels like a smooth people in your hand.

Extension Activities

- Share poems, identifying what aspects of peace the poem is about: inner, family, community, environmental, global.
- Using the small group words (related to peace and war), have each group contribute 2 words. Write all of the words on the board, and then have students write a poem using those words.
- Have students draw one image that they think of when they think of peace. Take all of the peace words from the small groups and the images and create a group collage.
- Copy the poems and put them together in a booklet that students can take home and share with their school classroom.
- Put together all of the peace words in one column and all of the war/violence words in another column. Talk about synonyms and antonyms. Ask student to point out *synonyms* from each of the 2 lists, and draw lines between peace and war words that are *antonyms*.
- Using questions from the themes hand out, ask students to write about each of the subject headings on a different day over the course of several weeks. Older students can be asked to condense their writing into an essay.
- Read poems by youth from around the world at www.poemsforpeace.org. Talk about what poems students particularly liked. What were the themes of those poems? Were there certain countries you were interested in looking at to read the poems, and if so why?

THEMES FOR POEMS & PROSE WRITING

PEACE

- What is Peace?
- How is it created?
- How is it destroyed?
- How can you contribute to peace?
- Consider five aspects of peace: inner, family, community, environmental, global.

DIVERSITY

- In what ways are you different from others?
- How has that been good?
- How has that been challenging?
- How can you share your unique gifts with the world?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Consider a situation where you had a conflict with someone.
- What were your choices?
- How did you respond?
- Was it successful?
- What did you learn?
- Would you respond differently if faced with the same circumstances?

SIMILARITIES

- In what ways are we all the same?
- What dreams do we all share?
- What basic needs do we share?
- What is the source of happiness?
- What is the source of hatred?
- Is it possible to view fellow humans as brothers and sisters?
- How would this effect peace?

COMPASSION AND FORGIVENESS

- What is compassion?
- What is forgiveness? Why is it important and who benefits?
- How does it feel to be forgiven for something?